

# *Enlisted Professional Military Education*



## **MISSION**

To develop, execute and evaluate professional military education and training focusing on leadership and our core competencies through resident and distance education programs in order to prepare students to meet the challenges of present and future operational environments.

## **WEB SITE**

<http://www.mcu.usmc.mil/sncoa/index.htm>

## **ORGANIZATION**

### **Enlisted Professional Military Education Branch**

The Enlisted PME Curriculum Branch of the Marine Corps University is responsible for developing and maintaining course materials for the:

- Command Sponsored Corporal's Course
- Resident Sergeant's Course
- Resident Career Course
- Resident Advanced Course

Additionally, guidance and oversight is provided in the development of the Enlisted Distance Education Programs.

Furthermore, the Enlisted PME Curriculum Branch assists in the support of the:

- First Sergeants Course
- First Sergeant/Master Sergeant Seminar
- Russell Leadership Conference

### **Contact Information:**

Director of Enlisted Professional Military Education  
DSN 278-3515 Commercial (703) 784-3515

Deputy Director of Enlisted Professional Military Education  
DSN 278-2514 Commercial (703) 784-2514

## **Staff Noncommissioned Officer Academy Sites**

**Director.** The Director is responsible for the execution of the mission and the daily operations of the Academy. Additionally, in coordination with the Director of Enlisted PME, the Director hosts the annual Regional Master Sergeant/First Sergeant Seminar. The director at the Quantico SNCO Academy site also assists in the First Sergeant Course and the Master Gunnery Sergeant/Sergeant Major Symposium/ Russell Leadership Conference.

**Deputy Director.** Oversees internal staff functions and performs the duties of the Director during his or her absence.

**Academic Chiefs.** Academic Chiefs for each site location are responsible for all academic matters to include: control testing, monitoring class schedules, recommending lesson plan changes, conducting Course Content Review Boards (CCRBs), and supervising the input of student data into the Marine Corps Automated Information Management System (MCAIMS).

### **Global Points of Contact:**

#### **Staff Noncommissioned Officer Academy Quantico, Virginia**

Director	278-2875	703-784-3138
Deputy Director	278-2875	703-784-3246
Academic Chief	278-6503	703-784-6503

#### **Staff Noncommissioned Officer Academy Camp Lejeune, N.C.**

Director	750-0301	910-450-0301
Deputy Director	750-0301	910-450-0301
Academic Chief	750-0302	910-450-0302

#### **Staff Noncommissioned Officer Academy Camp Pendleton, California**

Director	361-0213	760-725-0213
Deputy Director	361-0214	760-725-0214
Academic Chief	361-0217	760-725-0217

#### **Staff Noncommissioned Officer Academy Okinawa, Japan**

Director	315 623-4970	011-81-611-723-4970
Deputy Director	315 623-4970	011-81-611-723-4970
Academic Chief	315 623-4665	011-81-611-723-4665

**Staff Noncommissioned Officer Academy Sergeants Course 29 Palms, California**

Director	957-6260	619-368-6260
Deputy Director	957-6260	619-368-6260
Academic Chief	957-6265	619-368-6265

**Staff Noncommissioned Officer Academy Sergeants Course Kaneohe Bay, Hawaii**

Director	315 457-3109	808-257-3109
Deputy Director	315 457-3109	808-257-3109
Academic Chief	315 457-2600	808-257-2600

**EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY**

PME is designed to foster continual professional development of all Marines. The focus of PME is to develop professional competence in Leadership and Warfighting Skills at all levels of war and crises, ranging from humanitarian assistance to combat.

Administering nearly 10,000 students a year worldwide -- including foreign students and reserves -- the SNCOA plays a major role in shaping the future of the Marine Corps.

**EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES**

- Provide the best-trained faculty advisors and staff to create an environment conducive to higher learning.
- Analyze the nature of war through the study of past battles and conflicts and apply the lessons learned to the tactics used today.
- Improve verbal and written communication skills through classes taught by college professors and also through the use of practical application.
- Provide the highest quality education, geared towards tactical thinking, leadership, and mentoring directly linked to the next higher grade.
- Continue to develop curricula to support current and future Marine Corps Doctrine.

## **STUDENT BODY**

The student body consists of enlisted Marines from the ranks of Sergeant through Gunnery Sergeant. The prerequisites for these courses include: quality of professional military record, must have all professional military education for their current grade completed prior to arriving, must meet Marine Corps height and weight standards and meet the Marine Corps physical fitness standards. Students are selected by their commanding officers based on school seat allocations published by Marine Corps University to attend one of the three courses.

## **HISTORY**

In 1970, our 24<sup>th</sup> Commandant of the Marine Corps, General Leonard F. Chapman, Jr. realized that unlike Marine officers who receive intensive training before they are commissioned, Staff Noncommissioned Officers did not receive any formal training or education in how to lead. Thus, many junior NCO's were unclear as to just what promotion into the Staff NCO ranks required of them. Recognizing this problem, Headquarters U. S. Marine Corps tasked Officer Candidates School with setting up a Staff Noncommissioned Officer's School. A planning board was convened in 1970. During this developmental stage, a pilot formal resident course was designed to conduct two classes during the remainder of FY '71 and to validate the curriculum. The intentions were to conduct regular classes beginning September 1971. It was the vision of General Chapman that after the curriculum had been finalized at Quantico, the Academy would move to four field locations, and later there would be a good possibility the Quantico facilities would be used as a senior level (E-7 and E-8) college.

A syllabus for the classes was developed, and subsequently General Chapman authorized establishment of the Corps' first Staff NCO Academy. Headquarters announced the allocations for the commands. It stated that a Marine Corps Staff NCO Career School would commence on 16 February 1971, at the Marine Corps Development and Education Command, Quantico, Virginia. Initial classes would be limited to 50 Staff Sergeants. All major commands were asked to nominate their most highly qualified personnel. Selections of those to attend the pilot classes were made by a special selection board, which convened at HQMC.

SNCO's duties were now spelled out and more importantly; they were to be provided the education to cope with their duties. On 15 December

1970, the Staff Noncommissioned Officer Academy was officially established at Marine Corps Development and Education Command, Quantico, Virginia. Lieutenant Colonel George Waters was appointed as the first director of this Academy. He stated, "For years we have, through their leadership and professional knowledge, relied upon the SNCO to be the backbone of the Marine Corps, but we have failed to provide him with a proper education to meet the varied and demanding tasks. It is the purpose of this school, to graduate the Marines who have the education, military knowledge and leadership skills required of staff and gunnery sergeants regardless of assignment."

On 16 February 1971, the first course was convened here at Quantico, Virginia. It was the first of two pilot classes with the second one conducted in April 1971. General Leonard F. Chapman, 24<sup>th</sup> Commandant of the Marine Corps, was the guest speaker during the opening ceremonies. He quoted, "the establishment of this Staff Noncommissioned Officers Academy is another important step in the Corps' all-out effort toward a quality, highly professional, combat ready force."

The organization of the academy was very basic at this time. The Director was a Lieutenant Colonel, Assistant Director a Major, the Senior Enlisted Marine was a First Sergeant and each section had a Captain and Gunnery Sergeant as Section Advisors. The pilot program consisted of a six-week course with more than 210 hours of instruction. The curriculum included subjects of a general military nature and emphasized leadership, effective communications, both written and oral, drill and ceremonies, techniques of military instruction, and physical fitness.

During the first few years of the Academy, not only did the sister services attend, but also local police officers, the majority of which were from Baltimore, Maryland. A reduced Staff Noncommissioned Officer Academy program was tested in January 1980, at Quantico, Virginia. It was a two-week scaled down version to save money. It was partially successful. It was to be field tested on a full scale at major commands during May 1980. The reserves eventually implemented this mini course.

Other significant events over the past include, in 1981, the NCO Basic Course was established at 18 sites, and the Senior Course was implemented at Quantico, Virginia. In 1982 the Advanced Course was implemented at Quantico, Virginia. During 1987, our 29<sup>th</sup> Commandant, General Alfred M. Gray Jr. believed that all Marines were basic infantrymen and soon the Academies were teaching tactics, weapons, and other basic riflemen skills.

At that time he directed that Enlisted Professional Military Education Schools be run for enlisted by enlisted. Thus the first Enlisted Director, Sergeant Major David Sommers took over the Directorship from Colonel Wesley L. Fox on 11 June 1987.

Between 1988 and 1991, there were 17 NCO Schools locally controlled and staffed by Fleet Assistance Program (FAP) and non-T/O personnel. Each school had its own Program of Instruction (POI). As of 1992, all academy sites, Sergeant, Career, and Advanced Courses taught from the same POI structure, respective to their course.

By FY-92, SNCOA at Camp Butler, Okinawa, Japan was established. The SNCOA at Camp Lejeune, NC added an Advanced Course for Gunnery Sergeants and moved to their present location at Camp Geiger, NC. The SNCOA at MCAS El Toro, CA made preparation for its first Advanced Course (as of July 1998, the El Toro academy moved to Camp Pendleton, CA).

The SNCOA's at Quantico, VA, Camp Geiger, NC, Camp Pendleton, CA, and Camp Butler, Okinawa, Japan are multi-course academies for the Sergeants, Staff Sergeants and Gunnery Sergeants while the SNCOA's at MCAS Kaneohe Bay, HI and MCAGCC, 29 Palms, CA are single course academies for the Sergeants.

During 1994, the E-8 Seminar and E-9 Symposiums were established. All multi-course academies host the E-8 Seminar on a yearly basis while the E-9 Symposium is hosted by the Quantico academy. In 1996, a First Sergeant course was established and all newly selected First Sergeants were directed to attend the course at Quantico, Virginia.

Summer of 1996 saw the SNCOA working closely with Marine Forces Reserve to consolidate the Professional Military Education for the Reserves. For the first time in the history of the Academy, Marine Reserve Sergeants, Staff Sergeants, and Gunnery Sergeants were trained at one central location. The SNCOA provided a Mobile Training Team that deployed to Camp Clark, Missouri during June, July and August 1997. Beginning in the summer of 1998, reserve Marines are trained at Camp Crowder, Missouri.

## **CURRICULUM**

### **The Sergeants Course**

**Prerequisites for Sergeants Course.** Nominees must be in full-duty status, possess all required uniforms, and meet Marine Corps fitness and height/weight standards. Marines must have the minimum obligated service upon completion of the Sergeants course. Completion of the Sergeants distance education program is required prior to acceptance for the resident program.

The initial increment of Enlisted Resident Professional Military Education, is the Sergeant's Course. This course focuses on enhancing the student's individual leadership qualities to discharge the duties and responsibilities of a Noncommissioned Officer in the Marine Corps. The course is six-weeks long, highlighted by a student run Mess Night at the end. The student gains insight regarding military knowledge and recognition of the need for continued self-improvement. The course contains the following instructional areas:

- Leadership and Counseling.
- Military Training - Drill, Techniques of Military Instruction, Physical Training, Uniforms, Customs and Courtesies.
- Unit Training Management.
- Weapons Organic to the Infantry Battalion.
- Warfighting Skills and Tactics.

### **The Career Course**

**Prerequisites for Career Course.** Nominees must be in full-duty status, possess all required uniforms, and meet Marine Corps fitness and height/weight standards. Marines must have the minimum obligated service upon completion of the Career course. Completion of the Career distance education program is required prior to acceptance for the resident program.

The second increment of Enlisted Resident Professional Military Education, is the Career Course. This course provides a level of professional military education for staff sergeants, or selectees, from all



occupational fields. It is administered six times a year for Active Duty Marines and two times during the summer for reserve Marines. Each class is seven weeks long, the reserves is two weeks long, and provides study and application of a variety of academic subjects, as well as a series of guest lectures, which allows the students an insight into current developments in concepts and equipment. Just as with the Sergeant's Course, the Career Course brings their seven weeks to a close with a student led Mess Night. The course focuses on enhancing the student's skills of individual leadership qualities to discharge the duties and responsibilities of a Staff Noncommissioned Officer in the Marine Corps. The student gains insight regarding military knowledge and recognition of the need for continued self-improvement. The course contains the following instructional areas:

- Combat Organization of Marine Corps.
- Military Training - Company Drill, Techniques of Military Instruction, Physical Training, Uniforms, Administration, Customs and Courtesies.
- Leadership and Counseling.
- Weapons organic to the Infantry Battalion.
- Warfighting Skills and Tactics.
- Tactical Communication.
- Effective Written Communication.

### **The Advanced Course**

**Prerequisites for the Advanced Course.** Nominee must be a Gunnery Sergeant or Gunnery Sergeant select. Nominees must be in full-duty status, possess all required uniforms, and meet Marine Corps fitness and height/weight standards. Marines must have the minimum obligated service upon completion of the Advanced Course. Completion of the Advanced Distance Education Program is required prior to acceptance for the resident program.

The final increment of Enlisted Resident Professional Military Education, the Advanced Course, provides an advanced level of professional military education for Gunnery Sergeants or selectees from all occupational fields. A seven-week class is administered six times a year for active duty Marines, and a two-week class is conducted once during the summer for reserve Marines. They provide study in a variety of academic subjects as

well as a series of guest lectures, which allows the students an insight into current developments in concepts and equipment.

The course focuses on enhancing the student's skills of individual leadership, warfighting skills, functioning as a member of the commander's staff, and effectively communicating both verbally and in writing with seniors, subordinates and peers. The student also gains insight regarding military knowledge and recognition of the need for continued self-improvement. The course contains the following instructional areas:

- Leadership and Counseling.
- Effective Communication and Military Briefs.
- Military Training - Drill, Ceremonies, Administration, Physical Training Management, Military Justice.
- Unit Training Management.
- Supporting Arms and Tactics.
- Maneuver Warfare and Battle Studies.
- Combat Service Support.
- Command Post Operations and Rear Area Security.

Students conduct three separate battle studies that are site dependent. Students also sponsor a professional dinner near the end of the course; a suit and tie or dress is required.

## **STUDENT EVALUATION**

The SNCOA emphasizes high academic standards very much like that of the senior commissioned officer schools. All students' must maintain a GPA of 80% or risk academic disenrollment. Student's are graded by two methods: first is by the use of a comprehensive examination; secondly through performance evaluation

## **AWARDS**

**Honor Graduate.** Students from the Sergeants, Career, and Advanced Course who finish with a final average of 95% or better are placed on the President, Marine Corps University's Honor roll and will Receive a letter

from the President, Marine Corps University, Education Command. The honor graduates of each course will receive an engraved NCO sword awarded by the Board of Governors of the Marine Corps Association.

**Gung Ho Award.** The students from each class nominate one of their own for this award. Nominations are based on who showed the most motivation and esprit-de-corps through the course. The award is presented by the Marine Corps Reserve Fleet Association.

**Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps Writing Award.** Each course has a writing requirement with the top essay for the Sergeant's Course, Credo for the Career Course, and Professional Article for the Advanced Course receiving a certificate from the Marine Corps Association.

**Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps Annual Writing Award.** Each course submits the top essay for the Sergeant's Course, Credo for the Career Course, and Professional Article for the Advanced Course to the Enlisted Professional Military Education Branch. The Enlisted Professional Military Education Branch convenes a board to determine the top piece for each course. The winners will receive a monetary prize and certificate from the Marine Corps Association.



**STAFF  
Non  
COMMISSIONED  
OFFICERS  
ACADEMY**